



Durham Landscape Guidelines

Trees:
Trees and Shrubs Not Native to
County Durham

COUNTY DURHAM LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES: TREES
SPECIES NOT NATIVE TO COUNTY DURHAM

Species not native to County Durham

The following commonly planted species are not UK natives, or are UK natives which are outside of their natural range in County Durham.

Broadleaves

Alders

Grey Alder ***Alnus incana***

Green Alder ***Alnus viridis***

Italian Alder ***Alnus cordata***

Red Alder ***Alnus rubra***

Non-native Alders are occasionally planted on difficult and reclaimed sites as they are tolerant of very poor conditions. They are not recommended for planting in rural situations where the native Common Alder - itself a broadly tolerant species - is a more characteristic species.

Apple ***Malus domestica***

Cultivated varieties of apple, and hybrids with the native crab, are often found in hedgerows, scrub and woodland margins, usually as individual trees. They are relics of gardens or orchards, plants grown from discarded apple cores, or bird-sown wildings. Many old varieties of apple are now lost to cultivation and survive only in relic populations such as these. Raising plants from locally collected seed and planting in small numbers may help to preserve genetic diversity.

Beech ***Fagus sylvatica***

A UK native outside of its natural range in County Durham but extensively planted for its high quality timber and ornamental qualities. Naturalised in places. Will grow on a range of sites although preferring deeper well drained neutral to alkaline soils. Tolerates exposure. Suitable for planting as an ornamental or timber species in areas where it is already characteristic.

Buckthorn ***Rhamnus catharticus***

Former native now extinct in Durham and always probably rare. Not recommended for general use. As a food plant of the Brimstone butterfly there may be some value in reintroducing Buckthorn in situations where it might benefit this species.

English Elm ***Ulmus procera***

English Elm is considered to be outside of its natural range in the north of England. An ancient introduction with a scattered distribution throughout the lowlands of the county it is now substantially reduced by disease and can no longer be recommended for general planting

Other elm species with some disease resistance are occasionally planted - these are not recommended for planting in rural situations where alternative native species should be used. The native Wych Elm can still be planted in woodland mixtures and will 'self-coppice' and persist in the understorey if affected by disease.

Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*

Widely planted as an ornamental tree in parks, gardens and public open spaces in towns and villages, particularly in the lowlands. As a traditional ornamental species Horse Chestnut may be suitable for formal planting in urban situations but is not recommended for wider planting elsewhere.

Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*

A UK native outside of its natural range in County Durham, occasionally planted as a specimen and parkland tree, or self-sown in woodlands. Not a characteristic feature of the county's flora and therefore not recommended for general planting.

Limes

Common Lime *Tilia x vulgaris*

Large Leaved Lime *Tilia platyphyllos*

Occasionally planted as an ornamental tree Large-leaved Lime is outside of its natural range in County Durham. Common Lime has been widely planted as an ornamental species of avenues, urban streets, parks & gardens and plantations. As traditional ornamental species Limes are suitable for formal planting in urban situations & parkland but are not recommended for wider planting elsewhere. See also Small-leaved Lime.

Oaks

Holm Oak *Quercus ilex*

Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris*

Red Oak *Quercus rubra*

Non-native oaks have been planted in the past for their ornamental qualities, and in the case of Red Oak, for timber on more difficult sites. They are not recommended for general planting in rural situations where native oak species are more appropriate.

Pear *Pyrus communis*

Pear is rare outside of gardens in the county and never truly wild, occurring as a relic of cultivation in old orchards and garden hedgerows and occasionally as a bird-sown wilding. Planting outside of gardens and orchards is not recommended.

Plums

Wild Plum *Prunus domestica* subsp. *domestica*

Bullace *Prunus domestica* subsp. *insititia*

Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera*

Wild plums are occasionally found in hedgerows and woodland edges as individual trees or small groups. Bullace is very rare and Cherry Plum rare outside of towns and villages. Wild Plum is more common and quite variable. All have either been planted for their fruit, as pollinators for orchards, or are wildings descended from cultivated stock. Raising plants from locally collected seed and planting in small numbers may help to preserve their genetic diversity.

Poplars

White Poplar *Populus alba*

Grey Poplar *Populus x canescens*

Lombardy Poplar *Populus nigra 'italica'*

Hybrid Black Poplars *Populus x euramericana*.

Balsam Poplars *Populus trichocarpa*, *P. x candicans*, *P. x beroliniensis*.

Widely planted in the past for their rapid growth. Modern hybrids & cultivars have commercial applications as fast growing timber species for better lowland sites and include cultivars suitable for short rotation coppice and for agro forestry. They are not recommended for more general planting. See also the native Aspen and Black Poplar.

Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae Rhamnoides*

Considered native on the North Sea coast to the north and south of Durham and therefore possibly a former native of suitable habitats such as fixed dunes. Occasionally planted for erosion protection on dunes and as a landscaping shrub for its vandal resistance and tolerance of salt and exposure. A fast growing, nitrogen fixing species forming dense thickets, often at the expense of more desirable species, it has the potential to become invasive. It is not recommended for general planting in rural situations.

Sweet Chestnut *Castanea sativa*

Occasionally planted as an ornamental tree of parklands and plantations. There is no wider tradition of planting Sweet Chestnut in the County and it is not recommended for general planting in rural situations.

Maples

Sycamore *Acer psuedoplatanus*

Norway Maple *Acer platanoides*

Sycamore is a non-native forest tree extensively planted and naturalised throughout the County in woodlands, hedgerows and shelterbelts. As a tolerant fast growing tree producing quality timber Sycamore has commercial applications, and is a traditional field and shelter tree, particularly in the upland dales. As a potentially invasive species it should not be planted near semi-natural woodlands or other woodlands of a high conservation value. Consideration should be given to the use of alternative native species.

Norway Maple is occasionally planted as a timber tree and as an ornamental tree in urban situations. It is not recommended for wider planting in rural situations.

Whitebeams

Common Whitebeam *Sorbus aria*

Swedish Whitebeam *Sorbus intermedia*.

Common Whitebeam is a UK native on the edge of its natural range in County Durham although naturalised in some areas. A tolerant and hardy small tree often planted on difficult sites and particularly on calcareous soils. It is not recommended for wider planting in rural situations where species more characteristic of the County's flora are generally to be preferred. Swedish Whitebeam is a hardy small tree widely planted as a

highway and urban street tree. It is not recommended for planting in rural situations where native species are to be preferred.

Willows *Salix* species & cultivars

There are increasing numbers of willow cultivars bred specifically for use as biomass crops in short rotation coppicing systems. These are only suitable for commercial applications.

Wayfaring Tree *Viburnum lantana*

Considered not to be a native of County Durham though growing naturalised on the magnesian limestone in places. Not recommended for general planting.

Conifers

Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

A fast growing commercial species producing high quality timber for construction use. Only suitable on fertile soils and sheltered sites.

Larches

European Larch *Larix decidua*

Japanese Larch *Larix kaempferii*

Hybrid Larch *Larix x eurolepis*

Commercially important species widely planted throughout the county. Fast growing & producing good quality timber. Particularly suitable as a nurse crop for broadleaved species in mixed plantations and particularly on well-drained & reasonably fertile soils.

Pines

Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*

Corsican Pine *Pinus nigra* var *maritima*

Lodgepole Pine *Pinus contorta*

Scots Pine is former native of the county, introduced and naturalised in places. A traditional forestry tree producing good quality timber widely planted throughout the County. Useful as a timber tree and as a nurse crop in mixed plantations particularly on difficult sites. Can provide valuable habitat for red squirrel. A very tolerant species preferring lighter neutral to acidic soils.

Corsican Pine is a forestry timber tree suited to commercial applications in larger plantations, and particularly on drier soils & reclaimed or otherwise difficult sites- very tolerant of exposure.

Lodgepole Pine is a forestry tree with commercial applications in larger plantations, particularly on very poor soils & reclaimed or otherwise difficult sites. A quick growing species sometimes used as a nurse crop on poor sites. Timber quality can be poor. Tolerates exposure.

Spruces

Norway spruce *Picea abies*

Sitka Spruce *Picea sitchensis*

Norway Spruce is widely planted as forestry timber tree suitable for more fertile sheltered sites. The traditional Christmas tree.

Sitka Spruce is extensively planted as a forestry tree in commercial applications in larger plantations, and particularly in higher rainfall districts and on wetter acidic soils.

Western Hemlock *Tsuga heterophylla*

A fast growing commercial species producing good quality structural timber on sheltered sites. Useful for under planting in heavily thinned plantations. Suitable for poorer well-drained acidic soils.

Western Red Cedar *Thuja plicata*

A fast growing commercial species producing good quality durable timber on suitable sites. Requires deeper, well-drained base rich soils.